



Henry County Water Authority MINUTES

BOARD MEETING
September 14, 2023 – 8:30 a.m.

A meeting of the Henry County Water Authority Board, duly advertised, was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023, at the Authority's Administrative offices (Engineering Building) located at 100 Westridge Industrial Blvd., McDonough, GA. The following Board members were present: Jimmy Carter, Chair; Sandra Rozier, Vice Chair; Myra Lott, Secretary/Treasurer; Bruce Holmes, Member; Warren Holder, Member; Fred Mays, Member-At-Large

HCWA Attendance: Administration - Tony V. Carnell, General Manager; Karen Lake-Thompson, Clerk; Dave Peterson, CFO. Directors: Tamara Woodie, Human Resources, Dan Newcombe, IT, Tara Brown, Strategic Planning. Division Managers: Pat Hembree, Scott Sage, Allen Rape. Staff: Ken Presley, Brandon Keller. Lindsey Sanders, Hunter Parker, Sherrell Washington, and Brenda McDonald

Counsel: Andrew Welch, III (Smith, Welch, Webb & White, LLC)
Public Relations: Chris Wood, PhD (JWA Public Communications)
HRKS, LLC: Ardie Harrison, Sr. Vice-President and Leigh Westholm, Sr. HR Consultant
Visitors: Don Veum, Clayton Carte and Hutt Hudson

1. CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME VISITORS

Chair Carter called the meeting to order at 8:35AM and welcomed all in attendance.

2. INVOCATION

Mr. Carter introduced Reverend Karen Kelley of Shiloh Baptist Church, McDonough who gave the invocation.

3. ACCEPTANCE OF AGENDA

Motion was made by Mr. Holder and seconded by Mr. Mays to accept the agenda as presented. The motion carried (5/0).

4. PUBLIC COMMENT None

5. REPORT OF ATTORNEY There was no report.

6. REPORT OF GENERAL MANAGER

Public Hearing #2 – Development Impact Fee Ordinance

Mr. Peterson presented current costs and future costs to run HCWA's system and provided a history of impact fees, noting that HCWA has not increased impact fees for commercial development since 2014 and residential development since 1998. Mr. Carter opened up the floor for public comments. There was none. Mr. Holder commented that as much as he hates to raise impact fees, he understands that the 2-mil tax expires at the end of the decade and iterated that we have to do this in order to continue to expand and operate the system at the current level of service. Mrs. Rozier asked how we are advertising this to the

public. Mr. Carnell responded that HCWA will get with Dr. Wood about educating the community about our fees and stated that HCWA is still behind in fees in comparison to other counties.

Bruce B. Holmes entered meeting at 8:43AM

Resolution Authorizing Modification to Water/Sewer Impact Fees (Resolution 2023-14)

There being no further discussion, motion was made by Mr. Holder and seconded Mr. Holmes to adopt Resolution 2023-14 as presented. The motion carried (6/0)

	<u>Current</u> <i>(Per Equivalent Dwelling Unit)</i>	<u>Proposed New Rates</u> <i>(Per Equivalent Dwelling Unit)</i>
<i>Water Residential</i>	\$700	\$1,500
<i>Water Commercial/Industrial</i>	\$350	\$750
<i>Sewer Residential</i>	\$2,700	\$4,000
<i>Sewer Commercial/Industrial</i>	\$1,350	\$2,000

Recommendation to Surplus Authority Assets

Mr. Peterson presented the surplus list of Authority Assets, which mainly consisted of trucks and equipment that were aged out due to high mileage, mechanical and overall bad condition. A motion to approve the surplus assets as presented was made by Mrs. Rozier and seconded by Mrs. Lott. The motion carried (6/0).

Geographic Information System (GIS) Presentation

Mr. Carnell stated that when he started at HCWA over 27 years ago, it would take up to one (1) hour looking for plans in a room full of file cabinets, fast forward to present day with new GIS technology it takes less than one (1) minute and can be done from any office computer.

Mr. Keller provided an overview of GIS methods, hardware, software, and data. He highlighted challenges faced by staff in the past using paper-based maps such as limited details, controlled access, easily damaged or lost, fading over time and being too bulky. Currently 99% of our system is mapped. Mr. Keller provided a live demonstration featuring the latest technology and how easily staff can access information using a dashboard. Mr. Keller also highlighted some of the new features including reservoir levels, pressures, flows, and work order systems now digitally on map helps to prioritize work.

Mrs. Lott stated that she was able to see the technology first hand and that HCWA's GIS is incredibly impressive and the examples are phenomenal. She asked if other counties have GIS. Mr. Carnell responded, yes, however in the state of Georgia, HCWA is one of the leaders in this technology and other utilities/counties come to HCWA to model after our system.

Tussahaw Reservoir Incident Report

Mr. Presley reported on the tragic event that occurred during the Labor Day weekend at the Tussahaw Reservoir, where an angler passed away. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GADNR) reported the cause of death as a drowning.

Mr. Presley stated that the HCWA gate agent on duty responded quickly by calling 911 and GADNR, he also stated that HCWA has a great relationship with 911 and GADNR so that the response was immediate;

however, first responders experienced some confusion over the names of the roads to access our public use areas at Tussahaw (Collins Way) and Cubihatcha (Collins Road). He stated they are in the process of working with the County to rename Collins Road. Mr. Presley also reported that a meeting was held with key staff after the incident to go over safety protocols, which include requiring anglers to have life vests on boats as well as requiring children 13 and under to wear a safety vest (which is a requirement by GADNR). He further stated that HCWA has Automated External Defibrillator (AED) machines at each entry gate. Mr. Presley stated that gas boats, and the use of drugs or alcohol are not permitted at the reservoirs. He stated that there have not been any other tragic events to occur at the reservoir over the past 20 years and that over 113,000 visitors have used the facility. As a result of the meeting with key staff, HCWA will increase the promotion of safety awareness with the public through interaction and the use of signage throughout the property.

Mr. Mays asked if the Authority can also promote gun safety by making sure guests are not leaving guns in vehicles when fishing. He noted there has been an increase in gun thefts from cars in the Atlanta Metro Area.

Community Outreach Events

Ms. Sanders reported and shared video clips on recent public and educational events hosted by HCWA including the 2nd Annual Citizen's Academy, which graduated 14 participants. The program consisted of three (3) classroom sessions and two (2) plant tours. The second annual Kids Fishing Day was also a success in which 425 participants enjoyed fishing, food and prizes, with the proceeds going toward the Henry County Outdoor Education Partnership 501c(3) non-profit. In addition, HCWA also hosted Water Works Experience for rising 9th graders focusing on career opportunities within the water industry. A total of 10 students participated in the program, which included facility tours, learning how to write a resume, and mock job interviews.

Ms. Sanders also mentioned other upcoming events including the Rivers Alive clean-up at Walnut Creek behind the Target shopping center on October 12th and the Model Water Tower contest being held on November 12th.

Mr. Carnell thanked Mrs. Sanders for her hard work in leading the programs as well as Mr. Hutt Hudson for the video production of the events. Mrs. Rozier and Mr. Holmes also commended staff on a job well done.

JWA Public Relations Report

Dr. Wood presented a media relations report concerning newsworthy events and activities. He reported that the HCWA Youth Deer Hunt application process notice was sent to the public. He also reported on the Cubihatcha field trips where over 3,300 Henry County students will participate. Dr. Wood also reported on the media alert that will soon be released on upcoming Model Water Tower competition on November 12th as well as the GAWP Fall conference year end news release on any awards received. Dr. Wood also stated that he's conducting media crisis management discussions in November with HCWA staff. He's also working on completing the year-end newsletter and looking into 2024.

Mr. Carnell shared his appreciation of consultants like Dr. Wood and Mr. Welch for all of their hard work. Mr. Mays also thanked Dr. Wood for his great news coverage.

HCWA Leadership Academy Introduction

Ms. Sanders introduced members of HCWA's Leadership Academy as follows: Hunter Parker, Sprayfield Operator; Sherrell Washington, Billing Analyst; and Brenda McDonald, Finance Manager. Ms. Sanders shared that the Leadership Academy consists of 11 employees who are selected to gain leadership training as future leaders of the Authority.

GFOA (Government Finance Officers Association) Award

Mr. Peterson was honored to announce HCWA being awarded GFOA's Excellence in Financial Reporting and that this was HCWA's 13th year in a row receiving this award. He explained the process of applying for this prestigious award which involves interviews, sharing financial reporting and audits. Mr. Peterson noted that HCWA's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR) is published to the HCWA website. Mr. Peterson concluded that HCWA is on a good path.

Atlanta Regional Commission - State of the Region (October 27, 2023)

Mr. Carnell announced that HCWA has reserved a table for ten at the upcoming Atlanta Regional Commission – State of the Region.

Mr. Carnell informed the Board that we have received payment from GEOSAM to begin the sewer feasibility study for their development and we have given Barge Design Solutions the Notice To Proceed. Mr. Carnell also stated that GEOSAM would also likely be requesting a feasibility study from Clayton County Water Authority. Mr. Welch inquired about who would cover the cost of that study. Mr. Carnell stated that according to CCWA, GEOSAM would be covering that cost as well.

7. PROJECTS and ADJUSTMENTS

Mr. Hembree addressed the Board regarding the need for the Walnut Creek LAS Office Building (EXT2911D) and the challenges faced by staff working in the current location with no air conditioning, limited office space and one bathroom and that it would be very expensive to renovate the current building versus building a new office that can accommodate more staff and allow them to be closer to the land they maintain.

Mr. Sage reported that the Engineering Building (EXT2802) air-conditioning units need replacing due to the units not functioning properly most days. The current units are over 10 years old, and are expected to cost \$313,000 to replace.

Mr. Rape addressed the Board regarding the EXT3605E project, and shared that HCWA crews are actively identifying pipe damage (roots, grease build, and hydrogen sulfide damage). He explained other factors influencing deterioration are the concentration of the wastewater and the age of the ductile iron pipe.

Mr. Sage also provided an update of the remaining new projects and stated that the last project would be completed in accordance with the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) fund exchange.

- New Projects: EXT2911D Walnut Creek LAS Office Building
 EXT2802 Engineering Building AC Replacement
 EXT3605E Sewer Rehabilitation and Pipe Lining Jonesboro Rd/Hwy 75-S
 EXT3362 Camp Creek Sewer Improvement Hwy 42 to Hwy 20/81 Design
 EXT3891 James Creek Lift Station and SS Extension Design

Motion was made by Mr. Holmes and seconded by Mr. Mays to approve the New Projects as presented. The motion carried (6/0).

- Developer Projects: DEV3820 Amah Lee Mobile Home Park
 DEV3874 Calverton Subdivision
 DEV3854 Lester Mill Subdivision
 DEV3852 Luella Junction
 DEV1916 Taco Bell
 DEV3864 East Lake @ Price Quarters Mixed Use

Mr. Sage provided an overview of the locations and land use of each project. Motion was made by Mrs. Rozier and seconded by Mrs. Lott to approve the Developer projects as presented. The motion carried (6/0).

- Budget Adjustment: SPLOST3800A Rock Quarry Road Professional Svc
 SPLOST2225A North Ola Road Sidewalk

Mr. Sage stated that an increase in legal fees for the Rock Quarry Road Project and additional materials for the North Ola Road Project resulted in the need to request budget adjustments.

There being no further discussion motion was made by Mr. Holder and seconded by Mrs. Rozier to approve the Budget Adjustments as presented. The motion carried (6/0).

8. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Mr. Holder and seconded by Holmes to approve the August 10, 2023 Executive Session Minutes. The motion carried (6/0).

Motion was made by Mrs. Rozier and seconded by Mrs. Lott to approve the August 10, 2023 Board minutes. The motion carried (6/0).

The Board took a recess @ 10:23AM and reconvened at 10:30AM

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION (An Executive Session may be held in pursuant to O.C.G.A. §50-14-2)

Motion was made by Mrs. Rozier and seconded by Mrs. Lott to enter into Executive Session at 10:32AM in order to consult with the attorney for litigation matters. The motion carried (6/0)

Motion to end the Executive Session and return to Regular Session was made by Mr. Holder and seconded by Mr. Mays at 11:27AM. The motion carried (5/0/1). *Mr. Holmes temporarily stepped away.*

Upon return to Regular Session, a motion to decline the \$500,000 settlement offer for the personal injury claim was made by Mrs. Rozier and seconded by Mrs. Lott. The motion carried (5/0/1). *Mr. Holmes temporarily stepped away.*

10. OTHER BUSINESS

General Manager Evaluation

Mrs. Woodie introduced HRKS (virtually), the new consultants selected to conduct the General Manager evaluation and explained that it will be a smoother process and completed by November 9th.

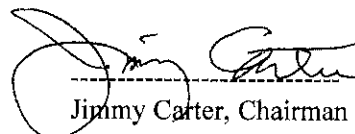
Ms. Harrison with HRKS provided an overview of her 25+ years' experience in the industry as well Ms. Westholm's experience in HR and change management. They went over the thorough review process involving 1:1 interviews with Board members, self-evaluation of General Manager, performance metrics and categories. Clarification of the ratings categories was also reviewed with 5 categories: 5. Outstanding, 4. Exceeds Expectations, 3. Meets Expectations, 2. Needs Improvement and 1. Poor. The Board agreed to modify the ratings to 4 categories, Exceeds Expectation being the greatest, leaving out the 5th category of Outstanding.

Mrs. Woodie provided Board members with a hand-out of key dates for the evaluation process.

Mr. Carter raised discussion about the questions used in the evaluation last year and the Board's ability to answer some of those questions. Mr. Mays agreed that some of the questions involved handling of day-to-day operations that the Board members do not witness. Mr. Carter agreed that Ms. Woodie would be able to review and select questions prior to the interviews. Mr. Carter thanked Mrs. Woodie and HRKS for sharing the General Manager evaluation process and timeline.

11. ADJOURNMENT

Motion was made by Mr. Holder and seconded by Mrs. Rozier to adjourn the meeting at 11:58AM. The motion carried (6/0).



Jimmy Carter, Chairman

Karen Lake-Thompson, Clerk